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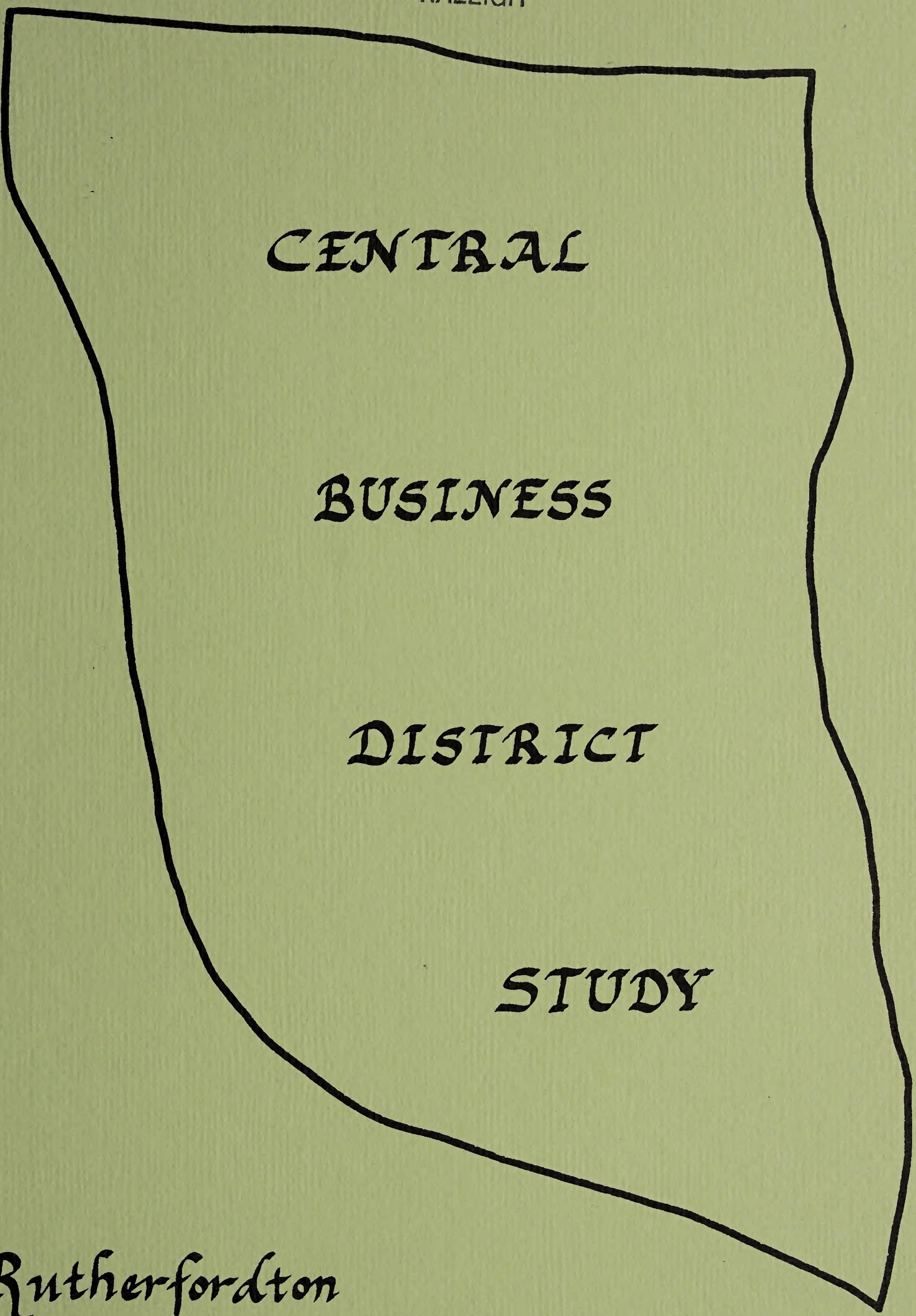

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT STUDY

Rutherfordton
North Carolina

March 1977

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT STUDY

RUTHERFORDTON, NORTH CAROLINA

MARCH, 1977

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FOR

RUTHERFORDTON, NORTH CAROLINA

1977

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This report is a study of the Central Business District (CBD) of the Town of Rutherfordton, North Carolina. Its intent is to provide the basic data about the Town's downtown area necessary to initiate a general plan for improving the physical status of the downtown area. Suggestions are made as to how the Town--its officials and citizens--may make improvements in the CBD. The Plan is of a general nature and presents suggestions that are obtainable within the limited resources that the Town has to expend on such projects.

Why is such a plan of importance? The answer to this is simply that for the businesses and other establishments within the central commercial core of Rutherfordton to continue to thrive, certain changes should be made in the physical arrangement of the CBD to enhance its competitive position with other areas offering the same types of goods and services.

Rutherfordton is a town of 3,245 people (1970) located within Rutherford County. The Town is the County seat of Rutherford County and this is the basis for the Town's existence. The shops, stores and other business grew up around the Courthouse, along with residences, churches and other forms of non-commercial land uses. However, during the past few years the CBD has gradually deteriorated and lost its competitive edge.

This report and plan makes three general assumptions:

1. There is a need for improving or revitalizing Rutherfordton's CBD.

2. Improvement will be of economic benefit to those in the downtown area and act to increase business and attract new establishments well suited to a downtown location.
3. Improvement will increase downtown property values.

It is hoped that this report will provide a stimulus for further action on the part of the Town's officials and citizens toward realizing the potential quality of what downtown Rutherfordton has to offer.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND FOR PLANNING

The Central Business District Defined

Rutherfordton's Central Business District (CBD) is defined for the purposes of this report as that area bordered on the north by 6th Street, on the east by Cleghorn Creek, and on the west and south by the creek running from the end of West 5th Street to Cleghorn Creek. (Map 1) Herein lies the central core of shops, offices and stores that provide the rationale for the Town's existence; the key to the Town's economic well being and the focus of the Town's everyday business and professional life. This is the area around which Rutherfordton grew; the County Courthouse and Main Street establishments.

The CBD by no means contains all those retail, wholesale, administrative or professional endeavors of importance to the Town. However, it is with the CBD where the diversity of land use patterns are the greatest and where problems generated by technological and social changes during the past few decades are most readily manifested. These problems primarily relate to the automobile, the changing concepts of marketing, the centralization of business ownership and the inter-relationships of non-compatible uses of land.

Rutherfordton's CBD contains approximately 74 acres of land. This area is zoned either General Commercial (C-I) or Professional/ Institutional (C-4). Either zoning district allows residences to remain as if in a residential district as long as the number of dwelling units or households in a given residential structure is not increased. These two zones allow for a wide range of commercial, professional and public/semi-public land uses but exclude industrial uses and those commercial uses requiring major highway frontage, open storage areas and large lot sizes.

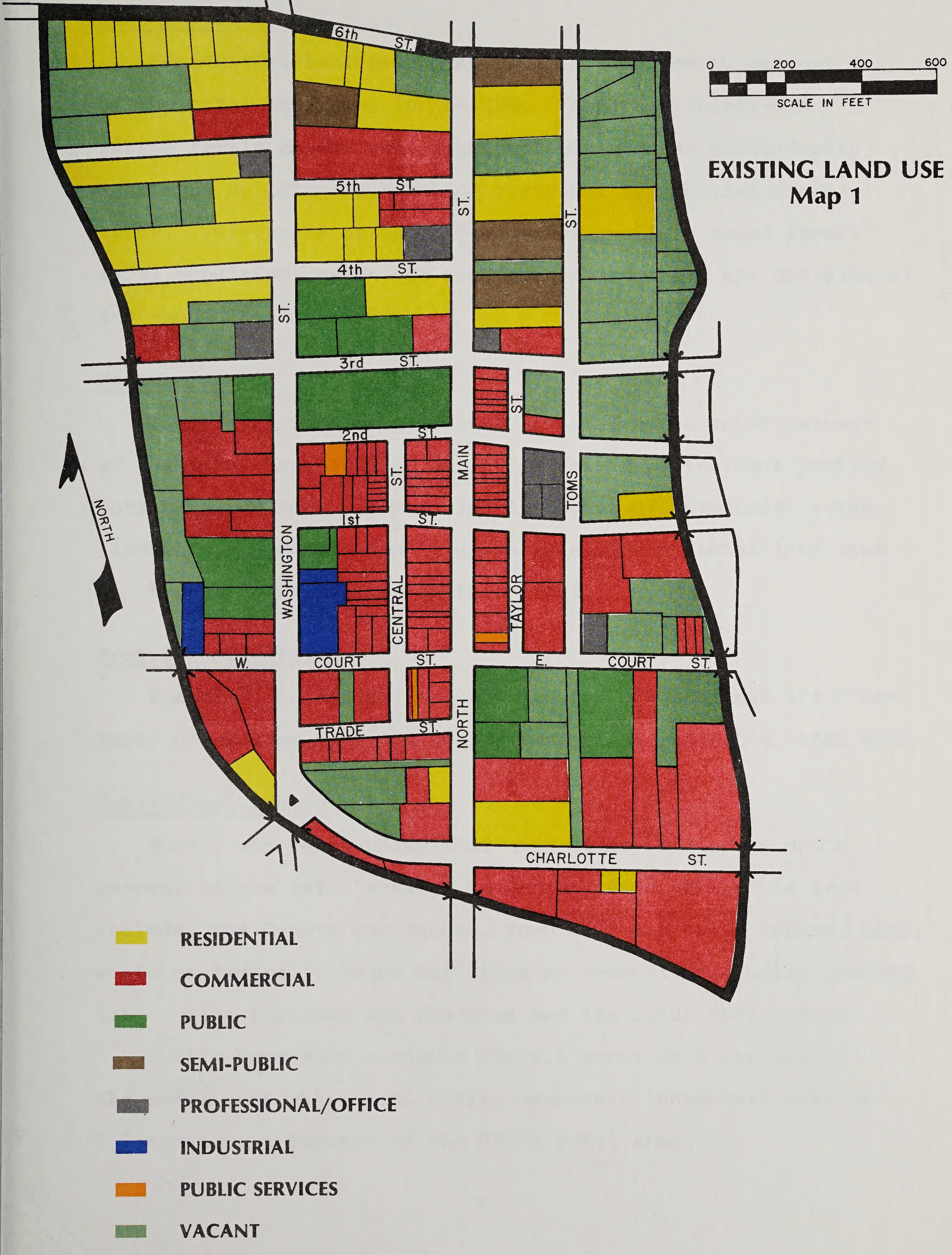
Land Use Within the CBD

The uses of land within the CBD are grouped into one of the following categories (Map 1):

1. Residential - Structures containing one or more dwelling units, including single and multi-family household units and mobile homes.
2. Commercial - Any activity dealing in retail or wholesale trade or providing a service to the public.
3. Professional/Office - The use of land for office buildings housing lawyers, doctors, financial institutions or related activities giving advice or generally recognized professional services to the people.
4. Public/Semi-Public - Governmental uses including administrative facilities, schools, post offices and semi-public uses such as churches.
5. Industrial - Those activities which are engaged in processing or fabricating of raw materials or the production of commodities or materials.
6. Vacant - Land on which no structure has been built and which is not being used for any regular or recognizable purpose.

RUTHERFORDTON

EXISTING LAND USE
Map 1



Residential

Residential land uses make up 11.8 acres or 21 percent of the total land area in the CBD. There are thirty-six single family residences; four duplexes and one multi-family apartment building; a total of forty-one residential structures. Thirty-one of these residences are in a sound structural condition; seven are substandard and three are dilapidated and should be torn down.

Commercial

Commercial land uses account for 21.1 acres or 36 percent of the total land area in the CBD. This area includes parking lots reserved for employees and customers of commercial establishments. A more definitive analysis of commercial land uses in the CBD follows later in the report.

Professional/Office

The area of land in the CBD used for professional and other types of offices is 1.3 acres; 2 percent of the CBD's total area.

Public/Semi-Public

Public and semi-public land uses occupy 7.6 acres or 13 percent of the total area of Rutherfordton's CBD. This area includes the County Courthouse, Town Hall and other county, city, state or federally owned buildings or property including parking lots. Also included are churches and the lands they occupy.

Public ownership accounts for 5.6 acres or 9 percent of the total area while semi-public ownership (churches) make up 2.0 acres or 3 percent of the CBD's total area.

Industrial

Industrial land uses occupy 0.8 acres or 1 percent of the total CBD area. There are two industrial concerns located withi the CBD. Both exist as non-conforming uses as industries are not a permitted use in the General Commercial Zoning District in which they are located.

Vacant

There are 15 acres of vacant land in the CBD; 27 percent of the total area. Most of this area is potentially usable for non-residential purposes if the concepts and principles expressed in this plan, Rutherfordton's Land Development Plan and the Town's Zoning Ordinance are made part of the Town's developmental practices.

Land Use in the CBD - A Summary

Table 1 shows the total acres occupied by the six land use categories and the percent of the CBD's total area they occupy. There is obviously an excessive area in the residential and vacant categories (48 percent of the total area). This will allow for expansion of commercial, professional and/or public land uses in the future, as the CBD expands. Residences--either single family or otherwise--may be expected to decline in number or be converted to other uses as the permitted uses in the General Commercial and Professional/Institutional Zoning Distric are built or expanded. Vacant land exists for new construction and expansion and also for the development of off-street parking and recreational facilities such as parks and playgrounds.

TABLE 1

LAND USE*

Category	Acres*	Percent of Total
Residential	11.8	21
Commercial	21.1	36
Professional/Office	1.3	2
Public	5.6	10
Semi-Public	2.0	3
Industrial	0.8	1
Vacant	15.0	27
Total	57.78	100

*Approximately 16 acres are in roads.

Building Use Categories

The detailed building use categories are defined as follows (Map 2):

PRIMARY RETAIL - Primary retail shopping areas are generally located in the central business district or in the large regional shopping centers. These trade establishments sell low bulk comparison and specialty items. Primary retail establishments can be broken down into two categories: 1) stores which generate their own trade such as department stores and variety stores and 2) apparel shops, shoe stores, jewelry stores and similar establishments which are economically dependent upon the pedestrian traffic generators--department stores and variety stores--for supplying potential customers.

SECONDARY RETAIL - Secondary retail establishments usually sell "high bulk" items such as furniture, appliances, home furnishings, automobiles, farm equipment, hardware, lumber, building materials and similar goods. Merchandise in secondary trade establishments is relatively expensive. Due to the expensive cost of secondary trade goods, the customer is generally willing to travel longer distances to compare merchandise between widely separated competing establishments. As a result, secondary retail establishments do not have to locate in close proximity to each other; instead, they often locate at independent locations along major streets or highways. In many instances, these establishments locate in areas which adjoin the central business district.

CONVENIENCE RETAIL - Convenience retail establishments merchandise goods commonly referred to as "convenience goods." They sell merchandise such as food, drugs, and gasoline which are purchased frequently. Establishments selling these goods generally serve a smaller market area than do either primary trade or secondary trade establishments. They are frequently located in outlying neighborhood shopping areas in order to be as near as possible to their customers. Food stores and gasoline stations generally do not prosper in the intensively developed core of the central business district since they require locations with convenient access.

ADMINISTRATIVE, FINANCIAL AND ADVISORY SERVICES - Administrative, financial, and advisory services include offices or establishments performing either the management or administrative duties of government, business, and welfare agencies or providing monetary and professional services for the community. These include doctors' offices, lawyers' offices, accountants' offices, banks, the city hall, the post office and similar uses.

CONSUMER SERVICES - Consumer services include establishments providing services to the person. Establishments such as restaurants, barber shops, theaters, pool halls, hotels, newspaper offices, telephone offices, and similar uses are included.

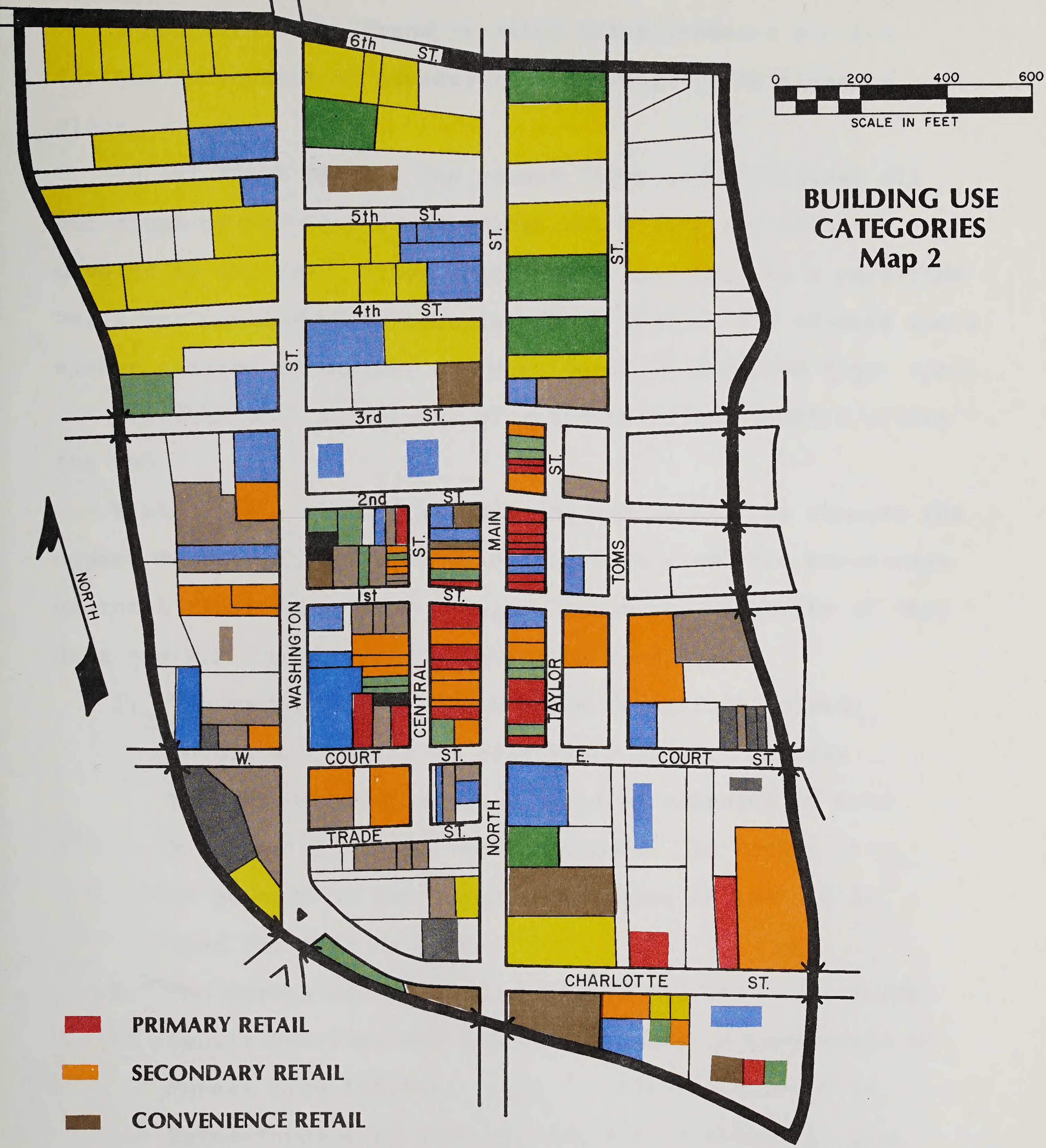
CULTURAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES - Cultural and social services in the central business district include churches, libraries, and similar uses.

INDUSTRIAL SERVICES AND MANUFACTURING - Industrial service and manufacturing activities include all establishments engaged in manufacturing processes and all related industrial services.

WHOLESALE TRADE, REPAIR SERVICES, STORAGE - This category includes all wholesale activities, mechanical repair services and enclosed storage.

RUTHERFORDTON

BUILDING USE CATEGORIES
Map 2



🟥 **PRIMARY RETAIL**

🟧 **SECONDARY RETAIL**

🟫 **CONVENIENCE RETAIL**

🟦 **ADMINISTRATIVE, FINANCIAL, AND ADVISORY SERVICES**

🟩 **CONSUMER SERVICES**

🟩 **CULTURAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

🟦 **INDUSTRIAL SERVICES AND MANUFACTURING**

▨ **WHOLESALE TRADE, REPAIR SERVICES, AND STORAGE**

⬛ **TRANSPORTATION**

▨ **VACANT FLOOR SPACE**

🟨 **RESIDENTIAL**

TRANSPORTATION - Transportation establishments provide for the conveyance of passengers and freight from place to place.

VACANT FLOOR SPACE - The vacant floor space includes all buildings or portions of buildings which were not being devoted to any use. Floor space being used only on a part-time basis was considered as occupied floor space. All storage space, either passive or active, was considered as occupied floor space.

RESIDENTIAL - Structures of residential use located within the CBD.

Table 2 is a listing of building use categories showing the square feet of floor space in each category and the percentage of total floor space each category occupies. Analysis of this data and Map 2 produces the following findings:

1. The percentage of floor space devoted to primary retail activities is relatively small. A truly healthy downtown economy could be expected to show a higher figure for this category. In Forest City, 24 percent of the total floor space in the CBD is used for this category.
2. The percentage of floor space in the Wholesale Trade, Repair Services and Storage category is comparable to Forest City (17.8%). Most of this floor space in Rutherfordton is used for storage in buildings once housing active commercial establishments that for one reason or the other no longer exist.

3. Administrative, financial and advisory activities occupy a sizeable percentage of total building space (20%).
4. Residential building space occupies a high percentage of the total limited non-residential expansion in the CBD during the past ten years. Only to the south along Highway 221 (Main Street) and Charlotte Road has major non-residential expansion occurred.
5. Building use patterns are such that--except for civic, church or public meetings--the use of the CBD after normal working hours is very limited. There are no restaurants, movie theaters or other activities to lure people into the CBD after working hours.
6. Vacant floor space is significantly high to be of concern, and when coupled with those buildings used for storage (Map 2)(Table 2), becomes of even greater concern.
7. Secondary retail activities occupy a significant portion of the CBD; especially along Main Street between 1st Street and East Court Street. These businesses normally do not depend on a downtown, centralized location (for example, furniture stores). Also they usually require off-loading and loading space for trucks and require relatively large areas for storage as compared to primary retail activities.
8. Expansion in the CBD during the last ten years has been primarily in terms of new professional offices, financial institutions and public buildings. This is not a bad trend and should be expected for a County seat town

TABLE 2

BUILDING USE CATEGORIES

Type of Use	Approximate Square Ft. of Floor Space	Percent of Total	
		Rutherfordton/	Forest City*
Primary Retail	77,497	9	24.0
Secondary Retail	135,034	17	24.1
Convenience Retail	34,977	5	3.1
Administrative, Financial & Advisory Services	164,175	20	7.8
Consumer Services	39,662	5	1.8
Cultural & Social Services	66,702	8	11.0
Industrial Services & Manufacturing	27,188	4	0.5
Wholesale Trade, Repair Services, Storage	129,161	16	17.8
Transportation	7,041	1	0.4
Vacant Floor Space	40,435	5	6.7
Residential	80,000	10	10.0
Total	761,437	100%	100%

*Source: Central Business District Land Use Analysis, Forest City, North Carolina, N. C. Department of Natural and Economic Resources, May, 1973.

9. Expansion along the southern edge of the CBD has been involved primarily with convenience shopping and consumer services.
10. There are no real patterns or concentrations of the categories of building uses provided in this report. The primary concentration of primary retail activities is along Main Street between 2nd Street and East Court. However, also in this area are four other categories of building use.
11. Industrial buildings are two in number and industrial floor space is only a small percentage of the total floor space.

Building Conditions

Buildings or structures--commercial, administrative, residential or otherwise--were inspected for external structural conditions and grouped as sound, deteriorating or dilapidated. These groups are defined as follows:

1. Sound - Structures which have no defects or only slight defects which may be corrected during regular maintenance.
2. Deteriorated - Structures having defects which would require considerable repair to prevent further deterioration.
3. Dilapidated - Structures which are unfit and unsafe for human occupancy. Such structures have one or more critical defects which are beyond economical repair.

As this is a survey of external structural conditions, error could appear in the groupings. Structural defects could be rather serious but not visible from the outside. Also the judgments made as to a building's condition are subjective in nature and therefore subject to interpretation as to the grouping in which a building belongs. Keep in mind, too, that a remodeled front on a commercial building is in no way indicative of the building's true structural condition.

Map 3 shows building conditions within Rutherfordton's CBD. The vast majority of non-residential buildings in the CBD are deteriorating. A sound building is the exception rather than the rule. Dilapidated buildings are present and steps should be taken to ensure their removal. Those buildings or groups of buildings offering potential problems for the immediate future are as follows:

	Location	Comments
1.	Trade Street and Main Street	Multi-family apartment building, seriously deteriorated
2.	Main Street (W) and Charlotte Street	Residence, dilapidated
3.	Main Street (E) and Charlotte Street	Residence, dilapidated
4.	1st Street east of Toms Street	Residences (two), one deteriorated one dilapidated
5.	Washington Street between 6th Street and 5th Street	Residences (two), deteriorated
6.	East Court near Cleghorn	Residence, dilapidated
7.	Block of buildings 2nd and 3rd Streets - Main & Taylor Streets	Deteriorating commercial buildings
8.	Washington Street between East Court and 3rd Street	Auto repair and sales, seriously dilapidated buildings

	Location	Comments
9.	Block of buildings, 1st and East Court Sts. Central & Washington Sts.	Deteriorating commercial buildings
10.	East Court near Cleghorn Street	Deteriorating commercial buildings (4)

In summary, the Main Street and Central Street buildings are deteriorating. There are exceptions such as the two bank buildings. This judgment is made from inspection of the rear of many of these buildings which shows decaying bricks, cracks, and other evidences of unrepaired aging. These buildings are not dilapidated but are deteriorating. Repairs could be made and appearance maintained as evidenced by the Independence National Bank Building.

Parking

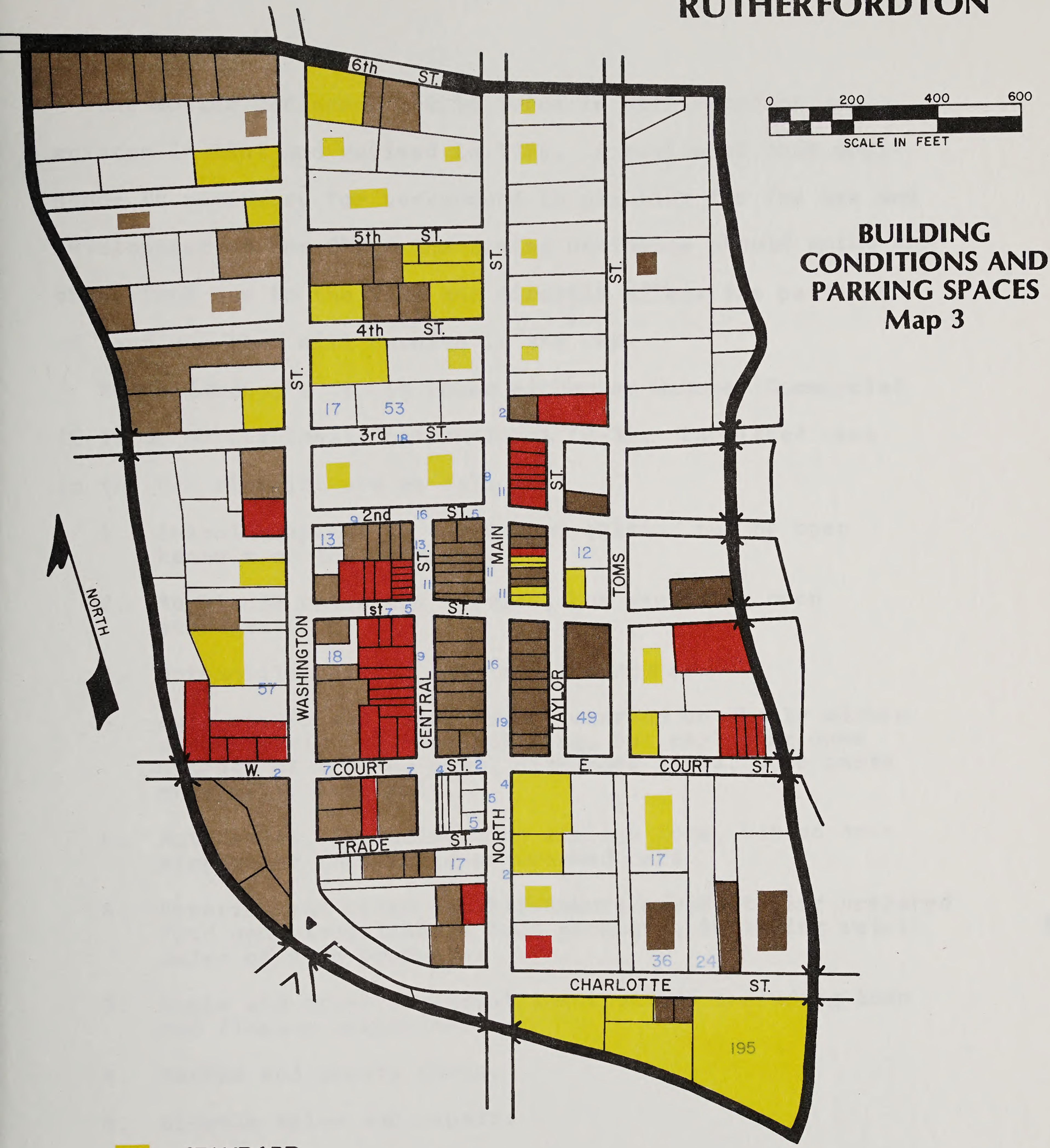
There are 817 formally designated parking spaces in downtown Rutherfordton. These are divided among streets (metered spaces), commercial lots and public lots as follows:

1.	Street Parking (Metered)	191 spaces
2.	Commercial Lots	481 spaces
3.	Public Lots	145 spaces

Map 3 shows the distribution and number of parking spaces throughout Rutherfordton's CBD. The number of spaces along a given street are indicated by a number on the appropriate side of the street. Additionally there are 15 parking spaces reserved for County or City vehicles along streets and 17 parking spaces reserved in parking lots.

RUTHERFORDTON

BUILDING CONDITIONS AND PARKING SPACES
Map 3



🟨 STANDARD

🟫 DETERIORATED

🟥 SERIOUSLY DETERIORATED

Zoning Review

The Zoning Ordinance now in force in Rutherfordton was written in 1967 and revised in 1976. A review of this ordinance is necessary for background in planning for the use and development of the CBD. The Zoning Ordinance should guide and shape land use in the Town and directly effect the patterns of land use that will develop in the CBD.

Rutherfordton's CBD is zoned either as General Commercial (C-1) or Professional/Institutional (C-3). Permitted uses in the C-1 District are as follows:

1. Animal hospital or veterinary clinic, but no open kennels on the premises.
2. Appliance sales and service, but excluding open storage.
3. Automobile parking lots and structures.
4. Auto repair and paint shops, carried on wholly within a completely enclosed building, but excluding open storage of wrecked cars, discarded tires, auto parts or similar materials.
5. Auto sales, including open storage lots, but no open storage of inoperable or wrecked cars.
6. Bakeries and other establishments manufacturing prepared food and miscellaneous food products, including retail sales of such products.
7. Banks and other financial institutions including loan and finance companies.
8. Barber and beauty shops.
9. Bicycle sales and repair.
10. Billiard or pool halls.
11. Bowling alleys, but not within one hundred (100) feet of any residential district.

12. Bus terminal, for passengers.

13. Civic organizations, clubs, lodges and fraternal organizations.

14. Cold storage or freezer lockers.

15. Colleges, business colleges, barber and beauty colleges, art schools, music and dance studios, industrial or vocational trade schools, and similar uses.

16. Churches and customary related uses.

17. Customary accessory uses and structures when located on the same lot as the main structure, excluding, however, open storage.

18. Dairy bars and ice cream manufacturers, but no drive-in establishments.

19. Dry cleaning and laundry pick-up stations.

20. Dry cleaning and laundry establishments.

21. Electrical repair shop.

22. Fabricating shops of small size such as woodworking shops, cabinet shops and upholestry shops, but excluding open storage.

23. Farm machinery sales, but excluding open storage.

24. Feed and seed stores.

25. Fire and police stations.

26. Florist shops, commercial greenhouses or horticultural nurseries.

27. Food stores, retail only.

28. Funeral homes or mortuaries.

29. Furriers and fur storage.

30. Gasoline service or filling stations meeting all conditions of Article IX, Section 905, of the Ordinance.

31. Glass and mirror shops, venetian blind and awning shops, tile companies, and similar building specialties outlets.

32. Government buildings.

33. Hospitals, sanitariums, nursing homes and medical and dental offices and clinics not used primarily for the treatment of contagious diseases, alcoholics or drug addicts.

34. Hotels and inns.

35. Ice pick-up stations.

36. Libraries, museums, art galleries, historical buildings or sites.

37. Locksmiths and gunsmiths.

38. Motels, motor courts, and tourist courts.

39. Municipal buildings, including municipally owned assembly halls.

40. Newspaper offices and printing plants incidental to such offices.

41. Office supplies and equipment, sales and service.

42. Offices - business, professional and public.

43. Opticians and optical goods stores.

44. Parks.

45. Pawn shops.

47. Physical culture and reducing salons.

48. Public utility distribution lines, transformer stations, transmission lines and towers, water tanks and towers, and telephone exchanges, with all service or storage contained within the building.

49. Printing, publishing and reproducing establishments.

50. Radio and television sales and repairs, electric shops.

51. Radio and television stations, studios and offices.

52. Restaurants, but excluding drive-in restaurants.

53. Retail establishments such as department, clothing, fabric, shoe, variety, notion, drug, hardware, furniture, appliance, floor covering, paint, antique, art goods, jewelry, gift, music, toy, sporting goods, book and stationery, magazine, candy, tobacco, pet, hobby and craft stores, and similar retail outlets.

54. Schools, elementary, junior high and high schools, both public and private.

55. Sheet metal, roofing, plumbing, heating and refrigeration shops, but excluding open storage.

56. Signs, advertising, business, outdoor advertising, and incidental or accessory.

57. Sign painting and fabricating shops.

58. Tailor, dressmaking and millinery shops.

59. Taxi cab stands.

60. Telegraph or messenger service office.

61. Theaters, housed in a permanent indoor structure.

Significant exclusions from the C-1 District are industries, open storage areas and other uses requiring large lot sizes.

The C-3 District allows the following permitted uses:

1. Offices--business, professional and public including apothacaries.

2. Government buildings.

3. Banks, including drive-in banks, and other financial institutions.

4. Churches and customary related uses.

5. Customary accessory uses and structures when located in the same lot as the main structure, excluding, however, open storage.

6. Fire and police stations.

7. Funeral homes or mortuaries.

8. Libraries, museums, art galleries, historical buildings or sites.

9. Public utility buildings and facilities if such use is essential for the service of the immediate area and provided that:

   a. All buildings shall be located at least thirty-five (35) feet from any lot line.

   b. Fences and/or other appropriate safety devices are installed to protect the public safety and welfare.

   c. No vehicles or equipment are stored, maintained or repaired on the premises.

   d. All structures are in keeping with the architectural character of the district.

   e. Adequate landscaping, screening and/or buffering shall be provided to insure compatibility with surrounding land use and/or buildings.

10. Opticians and optical good stores.

11. Signs, business, incidental or accessory and advertising meeting all conditions of Article XI, Section 907 of the Ordinance but not more than twenty (20) square feet in area.

In both districts residences are allowed to continue as if in a residential zone provided that there is no increase in the number of dwelling units per resident.

The area with which this report is concerned should develop according to the general guide outlined by the permitted uses in the C-1 and C-3 Districts as long as the Zoning Ordinance is in effect and is enforced.

Outdoor Advertising

The two major thoroughfares in Rutherfordton's CBD are U.S. Highways 221 - Business (Main Street) and 74 - Business (Washington Street). Both these highways are part of the Federal-aid Primary System which is defined as follows:

> Federal-aid Primary System - Those highways within the State system as designated by the State, which have been approved by the Secretary of Transportation pursuant to Subsection (d) of Section 103 of Title 23, United States Code. This system in most cases includes the routes designated as "US" routes, major "NC" routes and certain secondary routes.

In 1967 the North Carolina General Assembly enacted the "Outdoor Advertising Control Act" (Article 11, G.S. 136-12.6 through 136-140). Excerpts from this Act applicable to Main

Street and Washington Street in Rutherfordton are as follows:

1. Excluded from the Act are outdoor advertising which advertises activities conducted upon the property on which the outdoor advertising is located and outdoor advertising for the sale or lease of the property on which the outdoor advertising is located.
2. Outdoor advertising erected within 660 feet of the Federal-aid Primary System for which a permit was not obtained was illegal after July 17, 1972.....
3. Maximum area for any one sign shall be 1,200 square feet with a maximum height of 30 feet and maximum length of 60 feet.....
4. Within incorporated towns and cities no two outdoor advertising signs shall be spaced less than 100 feet apart.
5. A permit is required from the Division of Highways District Engineer.....

The Rutherfordton Zoning Ordinance also restricts outdoor advertising as follows:

1. Location - No sign shall be erected, constructed or maintained so as to interfere with vision clearance along any street or road, or at any intersection, or junction of two or more traffic arteries. No sign or any other form of outdoor advertising shall be located within the street or road right-of-way.

2. Illumination - No flashing or intermittent illumination shall be used on any sign or other form of outdoor advertising. All illuminated signs shall be so placed as to prevent the light rays or illumination therefrom being cast upon residential dwellings or being cast so as to interfere with traffic control signals.

3. Maintenance - All signs and other forms of outdoor advertising, together with any supports, braces, guys, and anchors shall be kept in repair and in a safe state of preservation so as to preserve the initial intent of their design and so as to remain fully readable. All signs erected to serve temporary purposes, such as for community events, social events, entertainments, special or limited sales, real estate sales, and similar circumstances shall be removed within thirty (30) days from the date their purpose ceased to exist.

4. Administration - A permit is required for the erection or construction of any advertising sign or structure except those erected to serve temporary purposes as defined in Section 907.3 of the Ordinance. Said permit shall be obtained from the Building Inspector. The Building Inspector shall refuse a permit for the erection or construction of any advertising sign or structure which does not meet the requirements of this Section. The Building Inspector shall order the removal of any signs that are not constructed or maintained in accordance with the provisions of this Section.

5. Conformance - Advertising signs and structures which do not conform to the provisions of this Ordinance at the time of its adoption shall be eliminated or altered or reconstructed to conform within six months (6) after such signs and structures become nonconforming under the provisions of this Ordinance.

Enforcement of existing outdoor advertising controls should reduce the potential for problems resulting from such experiences to a minimum. Spacing and maintenance of signs are adequately regulated. Along Main Street and elsewhere in the central core areas, however, outdoor advertising controls will have to be voluntarily complied with as a part of the overall rejuvenation program. As general downtown improvement programs develop, sign controls should be established to enhance uniformity of design in the downtown business area. Excessively large signs and overhead signs should be discouraged as a part of improving the visual aspects of the CBD.

Traffic

The two primary thoroughfares in downtown Rutherfordton are also U.S. highways and major routes of through traffic. Main Street is U.S. Highway 221 running from points north (Interstate 40) to the Spartanburg/Greenville, South Carolina area to points south. U.S. Highway 74 is a major east to west route into Western North Carolina from Charlotte and eastward. In the CBD, U.S. 74 has a business designation and a by-pass is available for through traffic that does not go through the CBD.

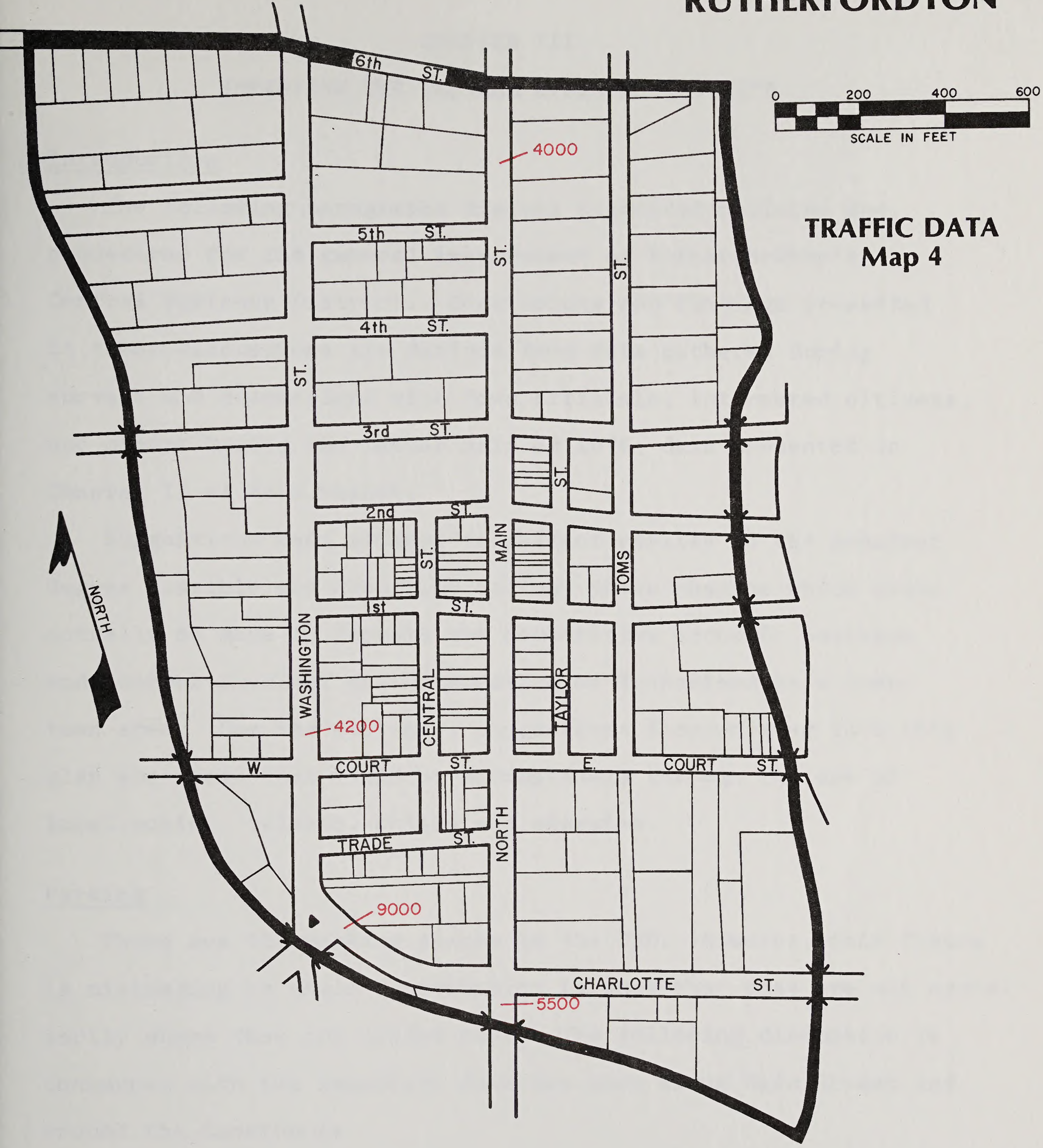
The average daily count of traffic at certain points in Rutherfordton's CBD are shown on Map 4. Also shown on this Map are the two traffic intersections where most traffic accidents occur causing $200.00 or more in damages. Both these intersections are along Main Street.

Within the CBD along Main Street from 6th Street to Charlotte Street 42 accidents occurred during 1975 (21 accidents) and the first eight months of 1976 (21 accidents). These are accidents causing $200.00 or more in property damage. This information was obtained from the Rutherfordton Police Department where officers estimate that at least twice this number of accidents occurred in this area but did not cause sufficient damage to be reported to their Department.

Stop signs are missing at certain locations in the CBD. Streets are in an adequate state of repair and all are paved.

RUTHERFORDTON

TRAFFIC DATA
Map 4



CHAPTER III

IMPROVING THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Introduction

The following paragraphs discuss suggested policies and procedures for the general improvement of Rutherfordton's Central Business District. Conclusions and findings presented in these discussions are derived from data gathered during surveys and discussions with town officials, interested citizens, and others during the latter half of 1976; data presented in Chapter II of this report.

Suggestions made attempt to reflect reality to the greatest degree possible and hopefully reflect those changes which could actually be made to improve the competitive economic position and general physical characteristics of Rutherfordton's downtown area. For the most part suggestions incorporated into this plan are those that could be accomplished through the use of local monies, talents, skills and energies.

Parking

There are 817 parking spaces in the CBD. However, this figure is misleading as their distribution is such that they are not necessarily where they are needed most. The following discussion is concerned with the immediate downtown area along Main Street and around the Courthouse.

There are three primary reasons why parking spaces are used in downtown Rutherfordton or three primary groups whose automobiles occupy downtown parking spaces. The first group are those who seek the commercial goods and services offered by those located in the downtown area. The second group are those who work in the downtown area and the third group are those who use parking spaces as a result of the necessity of doing business in the County Courthouse.

The total number of parking spaces in the immediate downtown area is adequate for one of two of these primary groups but is not adequate for all three at one time. At times parking is inadequate for any combination of two of the primary use groups.

Consequently, a solution to the parking problem should be directed toward attempting to control primary use groups and in providing adequate arrangements to meet the special needs of each of these primary use groups. Based on this approach the following suggestions are made:

1. Metered spaces along downtown streets should be controlled by using the existing meters or by other forms of time limits on parking to produce adequate turn-over of parking spaces. These parking spaces should be primarily reserved for shoppers and short-term downtown area visitors. Commercial lots are directed toward satisfying this type parking need and should not be used for day-long parking. Off street parking requirements for new businesses should be enforced.
2. Parking lots for long-term or day-long parking should be developed at the potential locations shown on Map 5. These lots would be for employees or owners of downtown businesses, County or City employees and anyone

staying from four to eight hours in the CBD during a regular working day. This would free the more centralized meter spaces for those who seek highly convenient parking for goods or services and thus enhance the competitive position of a downtown business. Centralized, highly convenient parking is one of the most important advantages of the regional shopping center.

3. High parking demand days generated by County Courthouse activities are generally scheduled days that can be anticipated and planned for. During these days designated areas could be set aside for use by participants in Courthouse activities to include certain close-by street parking and the parking lot across 3rd Street from the Courthouse. This parking lot should on other days be reserved for the general public and not used for County employee parking.
4. It is not recommended that downtown buildings be removed or demolished to create parking lots. The purpose of downtown rejuvenation is to create a demand for downtown buildings sufficient to ensure an adequate level of occupancy and the most economically beneficial use. Tearing out a downtown building unless the building is beyond repair appears inconsistent with these objectives. Additionally, the need for such drastic action to create more parking spaces is doubted if parking controls are adopted and enforced and more remote parking for long-term users provided. A parking

lot is not conducive to achieving a level of visual quality consistent with the desired intent of making downtown Rutherfordton a more desirable place to do business.

Traffic Flow

The fact that there were 42 automobile accidents causing $200.00 or more damage in the CBD along Main Street in 18 months is just cause for concern. This alone would seem to justify consideration of ideas to improve traffic flow on Main Street from 6th Street to Charlotte Street. Problems encountered along this stretch are the results of traffic congestion caused in part by the following conditions:

1. Main Street is also U.S. Highway 221, a main north/south thoroughfare for which no by-pass through the downtown area is provided.
2. Periodic observation supports the contention that excessive use of this area of Main Street for through truck traffic is a reality and does cause traffic flow problems.
3. Periodic observation also supports the contention that local trucks being loaded or unloaded along Main Street contribute significantly to traffic congestion.
4. Angular parking along both sides of Main Street coupled with two way traffic contributes to traffic congestion in the CBD.

5. Lack of adequate traffic controls at certain intersections where vision is restricted due to the topography east of Main Street, where traffic is heaviest coming into Main Street, or where narrow streets intersect Main Street from the west contribute to traffic congestion and the resulting accident rate.

The following suggestions are made to improve traffic flow along Main Street and lessen the probability of collision between automobiles:

1. Develop, in conjunction with appropriate State and Federal offices, a 221 By-Pass using Railroad Avenue (U.S. 74 By-Pass) and Charlotte Street (U.S. 74 Business) as a possible route.
2. Enforce restrictions on through truck traffic using Main Street from the U.S. 221 U.S. 64-74 intersection to the intersection of Charlotte Street and Main Street.
3. Prohibit local truck loading or unloading along Main Street in the CBD.
4. Develop a system of one-way streets. A suggested pattern for such development is shown on Map 5.
5. In conjunction with Number 4 or without its implementation, reconfigure the parking arrangement along Main Street according to one of the following guidelines:
    a. Main Street one-way south to north with angular parking on both sides of this street;
    b. Main Street one-way south to north with angular parking on one side of street, parallel parking on the other side; and

   c. Maintain two-way traffic with angular parking on one side of Main Street, parallel parking on the other side.

Regardless of the form the plan for new arrangements takes, it is highly recommended that the plan be consistent with the following principles:

   a. That separation of parked cars along Main Street be increased.
   b. That traffic flow on Main Street between 6th Street and Charlotte Street be enhanced through redesign, controls and restrictions.

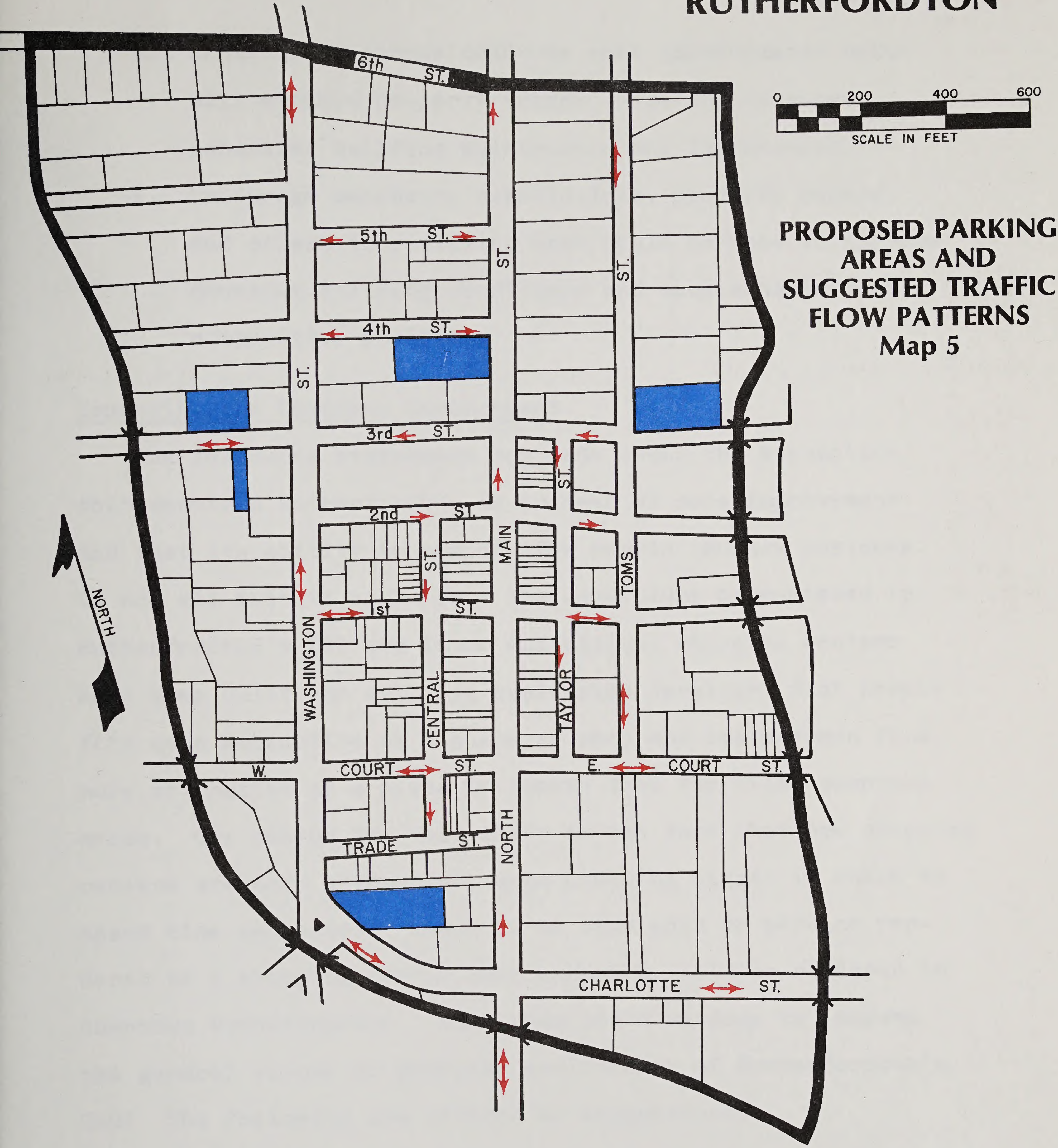
6. In conjunction with the traffic plan on Map 5, provide a traffic light--not necessarily to be used full time--at the intersection of Main Street and 1st Street.
7. Provide a left hand turn signal at the intersection of Main Street and East Court Street.
8. Provide a left hand turn signal at the intersection of Main Street and West Court Street.
9. Provide street name signs and stop signs where missing along Main Street and in the CBD in general.

Building Conditions

To improve building conditions and ensure quality construction in the future, the following suggestions are made:

1. Adopt and enforce North Carolina Building Codes.
2. Adopt and enforce provisions of this code or an individual ordinance calling for the repair or demolition of unsafe or unsound buildings or structures.
3. Enforce existing fire prevention codes.

RUTHERFORDTON



PROPOSED PARKING AREAS AND SUGGESTED TRAFFIC FLOW PATTERNS
Map 5

4. Continue to stress downtown area improvements which will enhance property values resulting in owner generated building maintenance and improvement.
5. Encourage merchants associations, property owners and others in realizing what could be done to improve downtown building conditions and thus enhance their competitive position.

Improving the Downtown Environment

The following statements are made under the assumption that downtown Rutherfordton is in need of some improvement and that its ability to compete for people and new business is not all that it could be. The conditions encountered in Rutherfordton's CBD are in no way unique; shopping centers have been built and outlying businesses developed that people find more attractive as a place to shop and businessmen find more attractive as a place to locate than the older downtown areas. One reason for this shift is the fact that new shopping centers are more attractive, more pleasing places in which to spend time and money. There is no item sold or service rendered in a shopping center that cannot be sold or rendered in downtown Rutherfordton. What then could be done to improve the general visual or physical environment of Rutherfordton's CBD? The following are offered as suggestions:

1. The buildings in Rutherfordton's CBD are generally of brick, block or stone construction. They have a unique character and style that is uniquely Rutherfordton's. Their appearance can be improved and character retained through the use of a paint brush or paint remover to a

far greater extent than may be imagined. This applies to the front of a given building as well as to the rear and sides.

There are examples of buildings in Rutherfordton's CBD that have been improved in this manner; visually enhanced while retaining the architectural integrity and character of the original building. The best example is the Independence National Bank Building on Main Street for the following reasons:

a. The exterior of the building was refurbished improving the visual appearance of the building while maintaining to a high degree the unique expression of its original architectural style.

b. No metal false front or large signs were used.

c. The rear of the building was fixed-up and made functional as a rear entrance.

This type of improvement costs money but not a great deal of money compared to major structural modifications. If such efforts are undertaken by individual property owners, they should be coordinated through local associations using local architectural skills for advise and overall direction.

2. Large, store front signs, overhead signs and false plastic or metal store fronts should be avoided when considering building refurbishment. The existing outdoor advertising controls applicable to the Town should be enforced.

3. The rear or back area of buildings should be improved as a part of the overall refurbishment program and made functional for entrances if at all possible. This especially applies to those buildings on the west side of Main Street between 2nd Street and West Court Street.
4. Once a person has parked his automobile and is on foot his competition with the automobile should be minimized. The environment through which this person passes should be such of sufficient quality to entice this person to return.
5. By planting trees and shrubs the visual environment can be significantly enhanced. Here again, a major project is not called for but a new dimension to the downtown area may be gained. A few trees and the landscaping of small downtown areas is what is called for. Among the small trees, three are ideally suited for planting in downtown Rutherfordton:
    a. Ilex opaca fosteri. Foster's Holly. Height 18-20 feet. Spread, 6-8 feet. This is a very hardy, handsome tree. It is pyramidal shaped with evergreen foliage. The evergreen is particularly welcome.
    b. Lagerstromia indica. Crepe Myrtle. Height 20-30 feet. Spread, 10-15 feet. This handsome small tree has dull green foliage appearing in the spring and turns to a burnished copper in the fall. Throughout the summer, upright clusters of flowers (pink, red and white) create a profusion of color. The sculpture-like appearance of the trunk and bark

make the crepe myrtle interesting all year, even in winter when the leaves are gone. The crepe myrtle is reasonably fast growing, relatively free from disease and is longlived.

c. Pruma caroliniana. Carolina Cherry Laurel. Height, 20-30 feet. Spread, 15-20 feet. This beautiful small tree has the advantage of being an evergreen. The lustrous dark foliage forms a small symmetrical tree with a heavy round crown. Numerous small white flowers form in the spring and black berrylike fruits develop later. The cherry laurel is relatively free of insects and diseases.

6. If a pedestrian is to fully enjoy his stay in downtown Rutherfordton, he must have some place to rest outdoors--weather permitting. The mall type shopping center certainly takes advantage of this concept and downtown Rutherfordton could certainly benefit from creating small islands within the CBD reserved for the pedestrian. Nothing particularly elaborate is necessary; a park bench with adjacent planters being the basic configuration perhaps with an attractively painted trash receptacle nearby.

Here again, the idea is to help the pedestrian enjoy his stay in the downtown area by making it a prettier place in which to be. Developers of shopping centers go to considerable expense to create an atmosphere which the shopper will enjoy. There is no reason why such thinking cannot be applied to Rutherfordton's downtown area.

Open areas or small parks could be developed to complement downtown rejuvenation. Possible locations for such parks are shown on Map 6. These areas are within a four block walk of the Courthouse. Smaller areas within the heart of the business district could be developed or landscaped if only a few square feet in size. Such areas include the dead space back of the buildings on the west side of Main Street, the parking area at the Town Hall, and the Town owned parking lot across West Street from the Town Hall. Each of these areas could be landscaped and designed to incorporate some of the desirable features of a small park or green area.

Consistent with this idea of creating impressions of open space and green areas is the painting of building sides and where possible portions of building fronts in a decorative manner. These spaces also are available for artistically rendered posters or community oriented information boards such as a large location map showing downtown business locations.

The ideas for doing this type thing are virtually unlimited. Only the imagination and energy of the Town's citizens limit the possibilities for such expressions.

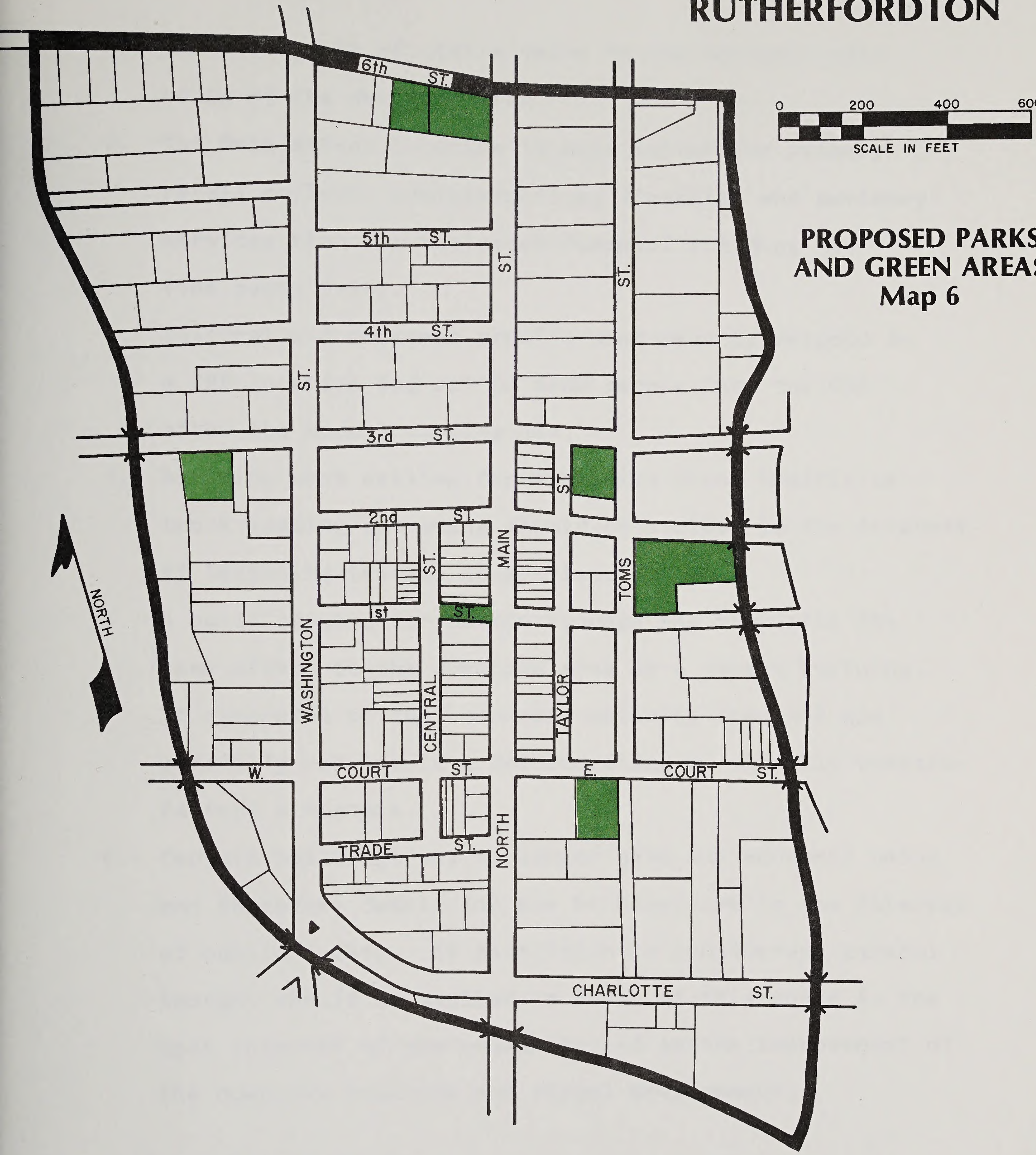
Building Use

Planning for building use is perhaps impossible but certain principles can be kept in mind by the Town's officials and the community at large in making decisions on the use of downtown buildings.

1. The use of a building in the CBD for any purpose permitted under the zoning ordinance is better than leaving a building vacant. The use of a building

RUTHERFORDTON

PROPOSED PARKS AND GREEN AREAS
Map 6



for storage is of little value to the economic well being of the downtown area.

2. The Main Street location is more suited for primary retail outlets, administrative, financial and advisory services than for the other forms of building use (See pages 9-15).
3. Cultural and consumer service uses readily respond to a CBD location and act to draw people into the CBD after the normal working day.
4. Building uses calling for excessive truck traffic or truck loading/unloading should be avoided in the interest of lessening traffic congestion.
5. A building used for common storage has virtually the same effect on the downtown area as a vacant building. It generates no real economic activity (people) and generally results in a deteriorating or visually unsatisfactory structure.
6. Certain buildings may no longer have any economic value and therefore demolition may be necessary in the interest of public safety. If demolition is considered, careful thought should be applied to reuse of this space in the best interest of the community and in the improvement of the downtown business and visual environment.

Areas of Special Interest

A. Central Street from 2nd Street to West Court Street

Some thought has been given to closing off Central Street to traffic. This idea is very good but building use in this area presents a problem. The furniture stores that front or back along this street generate truck traffic necessary for their continued existence. Closing this street entirely would, of course, deny access to these stores by truck and present them with serious problems. The street, however, could be closed to all but delivery vehicles. Parking spaces would be lost if this section of Central Street were closed.

B. 1st Street Between Central Street and Main Street

Here is an ideal area for the development of a small, downtown shopper's mall or mini-park (Map 6). This segment of street could be closed off, sides of buildings painted or otherwise decorated, the surface leveled, and the resulting square footage landscaped and equipped as a small pedestrian island. Based on observations, closing this segment of 1st Street would have little impact on downtown traffic flow. Development could be accomplished at relatively little cost (no acquisition costs) and with no disruption of normal business patterns.

C. Sidewalks

The Town Council is considering a campaign to improve sidewalks in the Town. In the CBD along Main Street such improvements--in conjunction with other suggestions in this report--could have a most positive effect. It is suggested that some material other than concrete be used for sidewalks in this area such as brick.

D. Underground Utilities

One of the main detriments to the visual environment of downtown Rutherfordton is the cluster of utility poles and overhead electric lines. To place utility lines underground in the CBD would be an expensive project overall, but could be approached by scheduling certain areas on an annual basis for placing all utilities underground. Cost for such work could be budgeted annually and work scheduled in conjunction with utility companies. Such a project could take up to six years to complete at an estimated annual cost of from $20,000 to $25,000.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Downtown Rutherfordton contains a diversity of land uses not all of which are compatible. There are businesses of all types, centers of local government, industries and residences all competing to maintain the proper environment in which they best function.

Within the commercial sector there is a wide range of building use categories or types of businesses. Not all of these types are conducive to planning for a revitalized downtown area; for example, storage buildings. However, through an effort to revitalize the downtown area, these non-desirable uses should disappear or decrease as property values increase and the demand for downtown building space increases.

Physical conditions can be improved in the CBD through local efforts and with reasonable expense on the part of the Town and property owners. Traffic and parking problems can be lessened and the overall traffic situation improved without major shifts in the normal pattern of downtown business life.

Absent in the downtown area are those privately owned businesses that could draw people into the downtown area after normal business hours. Local government functions and churches, however, do act in this capacity.

The first and most important step toward improving and revitalizing Rutherfordton's downtown area is organizing concerned property owners and concerned citizens into a force that will seek improvement. Once this is accomplished and using this report as a base, specific projects can be formulated that in time will produce a more desirable downtown environment. The choice is whether or not to compete with other communities and regional shopping complexes for people and businesses.

Some towns in the State of North Carolina are actively engaged in a downtown revitalization effort. Some have achieved significant results and are now able to adequately compete.

Rutherfordton's downtown area does have a problem as evidenced by traffic congestion, vacant land, vacant storage buildings and the general appearance of the area. Hopefully this report will provide some assistance to the Town in defining this problem and providing a general guideline for making improvements to revitalize the CBD in order to ensure a successful future for its business and services and for the residents of the Town.

CHAPTER V

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of any plan for the CBD will require participation of many public and private groups: a downtown business association, major land holders, civic organizations and municipal government. No one group can do the job alone. Part of the responsibility will fall on the public agencies and part on private groups and individuals. (See Suggested Organization for Downtown Improvement Program Chart.)

Public Responsibility

In general, public responsibilities and funds should support traffic flow, parking and sidewalk improvements.

Private Responsibility

Improvements cannot take place without the investment of private resources and funds. No downtown improvement program can succeed without full agreement and sponsorship by private business interests in the CBD.

Store modernization must be provided by private property owners investing their own money. Government programs such as the Small Business Administration gives help by providing loans to private developers.

Joint Responsibility

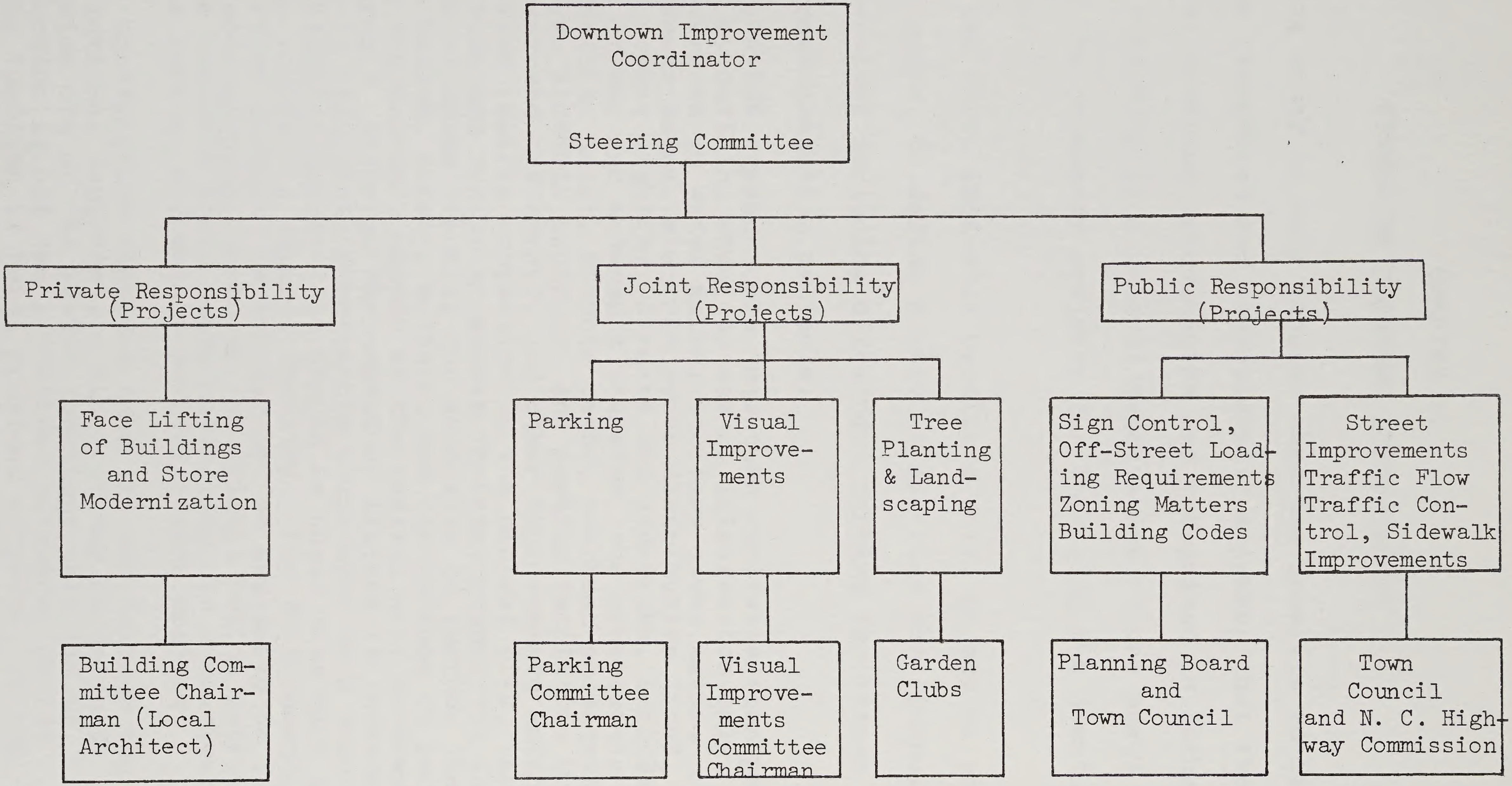
Some improvements will require investment of both public and private funds to construct or maintain because of use and maintenance of the improvement. For example, both public and private funds should be used for general visual improvements, tree planting and pedestrian oriented improvements.

Organization

A suggested organization chart follows. It recommends that one person be appointed or elected as downtown improvement coordinator. This person would coordinate the activities of private interests (committees) with those of the City. It is recommended that a local architect be retained to develop an overall plan in conjunction with the downtown improvement coordinator.

TABLE 3

SUGGESTED ORGANIZATION FOR DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM


Downtown Improvement Coordinator
Steering Committee
Private Responsibility (Projects)
Joint Responsibility (Projects)
Public Responsibility (Projects)
Face Lifting of Buildings and Store Modernization
Parking
Visual Improvements
Tree Planting & Landscaping
Sign Control, Off-Street Loading Requirements Zoning Matters Building Codes
Street Improvements Traffic Flow Traffic Control, Sidewalk Improvements
Building Committee Chairman (Local Architect)
Parking Committee Chairman
Visual Improvements Committee Chairman
Garden Clubs
Planning Board and Town Council
Town Council and N. C. Highway Commission

CHAPTER VI

FINANCING DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS

Spending money is only popular when the benefits to be gained are recognized and appreciated. Assuming that the benefits of downtown rejuvenation are recognized in Rutherfordton, the following is a general description of one means for financing the necessary projects for improving the downtown environment.

State law (G.S. 160A-536) permits a city, by action of its governing board, to define a service district for financing several services including off-street parking facilities and downtown revitalization projects.

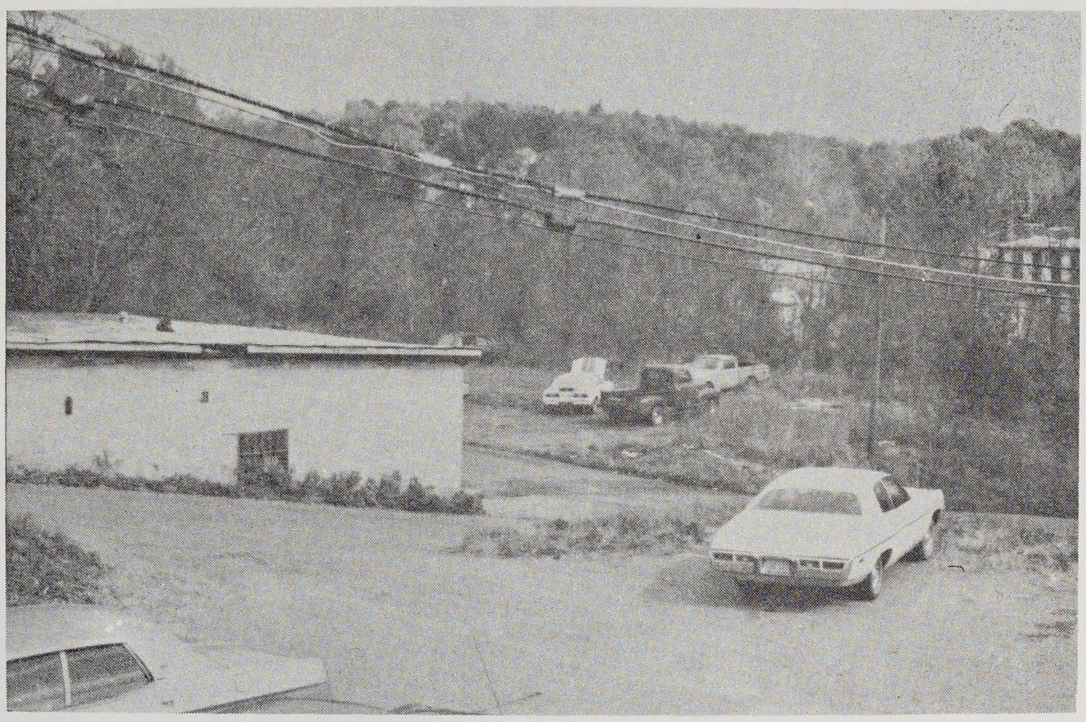
> G.S. 160A-536 expands upon "downtown revitalization projects" by defining them, by way of illustration only, as "improvements to water mains, sanitary sewer mains, storm sewer mains, electric power distribution lines, gas mains, street lighting, streets and sidewalks, including rights of way and easements therefor, the construction of pedestrian malls, bicycle paths, overhead pedestrian walkways, sidewalk canopies, and parking facilities both on-street and off-street, and other improvements intended to relieve traffic congestion in the central city, improve pedestrian and vehicular access thereto, reduce the incidence of crime therein, and generally to further the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience by promoting the economic health of the central city or downtown area." Although the statutory listing is intended simply to illustrate permissable components of a downtown revitalization project, it should be noted that each illustration involves a capital facility. For that reason, the service district device may not be available to finance additional services--such as, additional police patrols or more frequent solid waste collection--in a downtown area as part of a downtown revitalization project.
>
> As the Constitution requires (and the act follows the constitutional language), a district may be defined to provide one of the listed functions only (1) if the function is not being provided citywide; or (2) when the function is being provided citywide, if the function will be provided within the district at a higher level than the citywide level.

> A district may be defined to provide one or any combination of the permitted services. Also, districts providing different services may overlap.

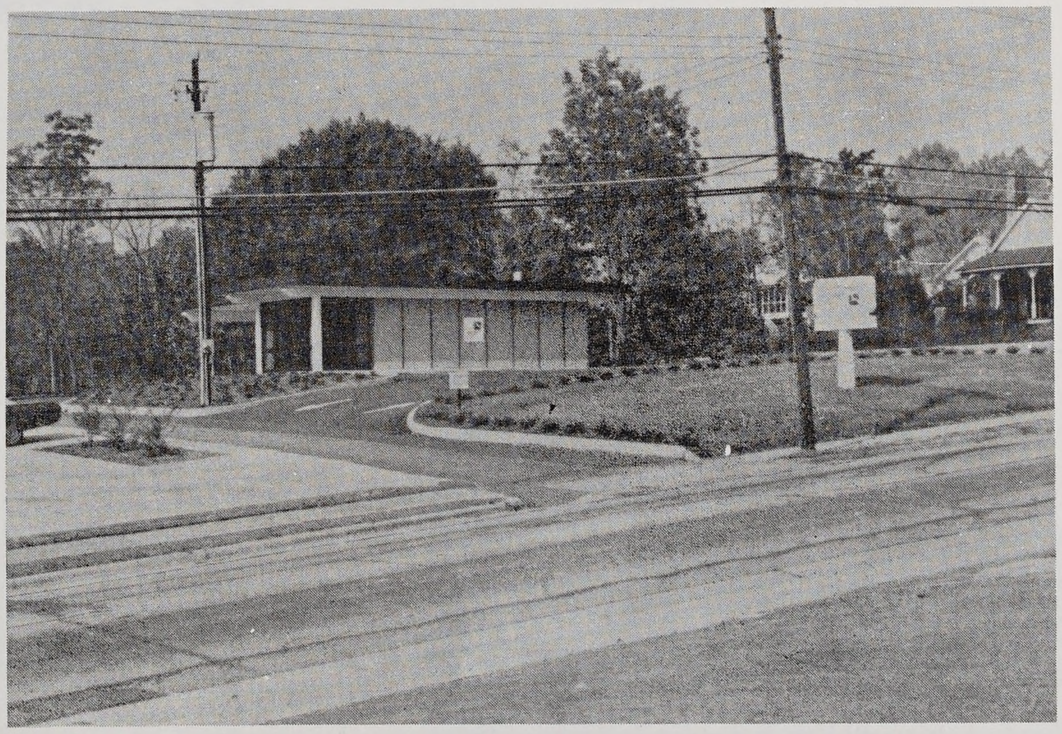
A service district could be drawn to include the central downtown commercial district. Property owners would then be taxed at a higher rate in the district in order to pay the cost for improving their general physical environment. The procedure for establishing a service district is well defined in legislation passed during 1973. The advantages to the approach are primarily in that local control would be maintained over all programs. No external sources of revenue would be necessary and those who stand to benefit the most from rejuvenation of the downtown area would pay the price.

CHAPTER VII

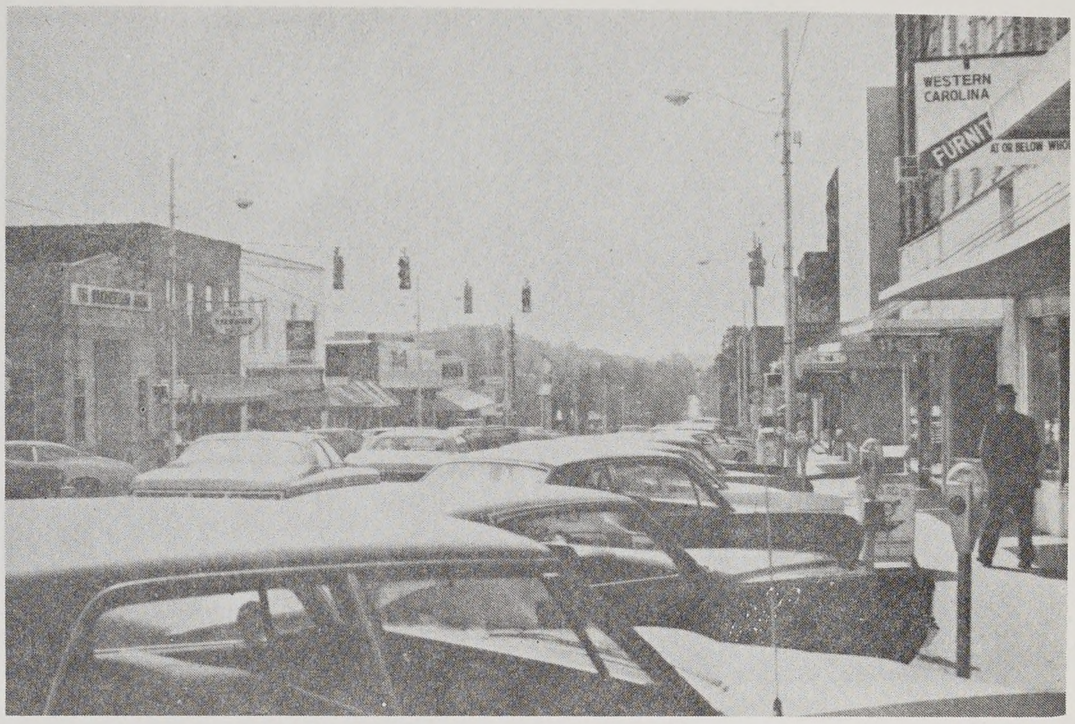
PHOTOGRAPHS OF DOWNTOWN RUTHERFORDTON: A NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT

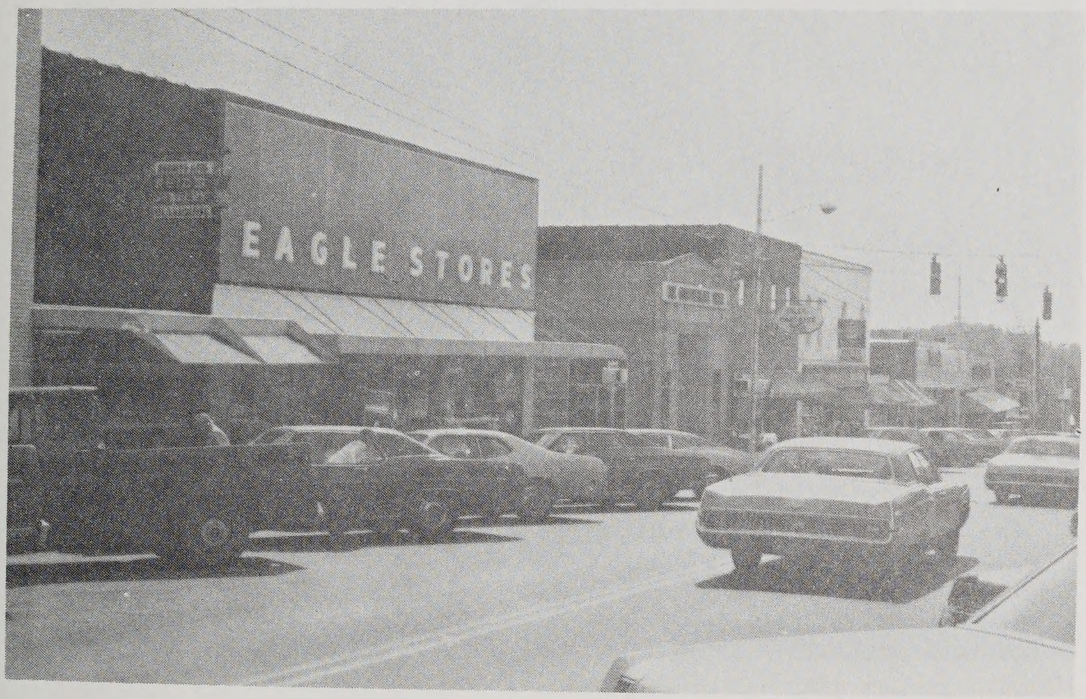


POTENTIAL PROBLEM

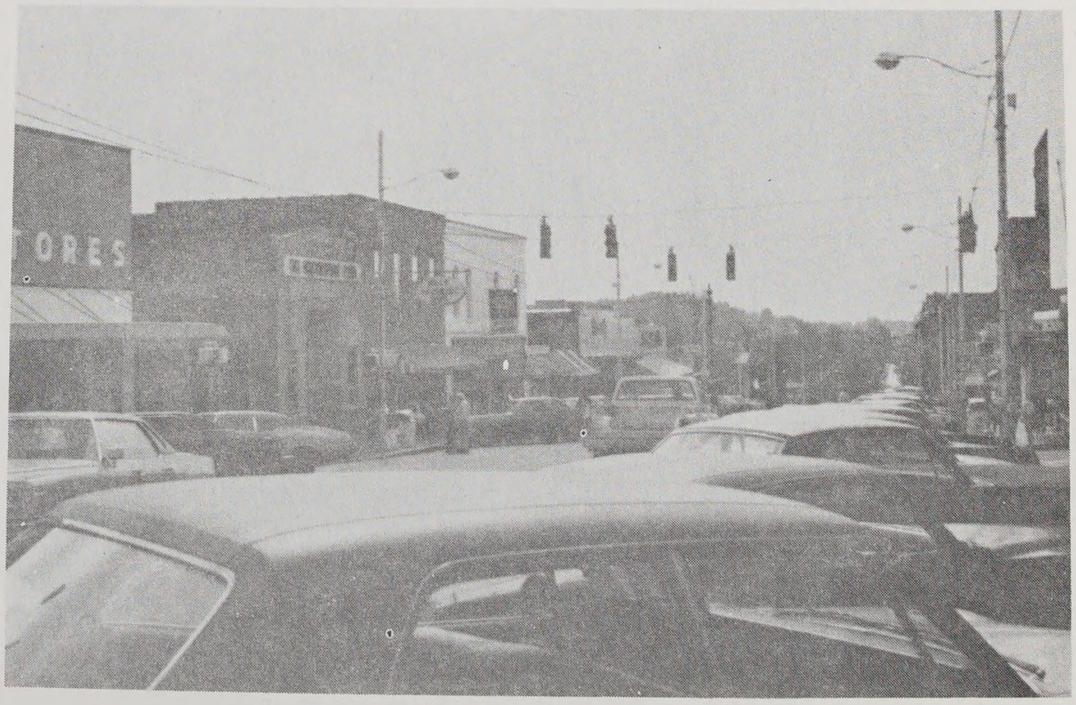


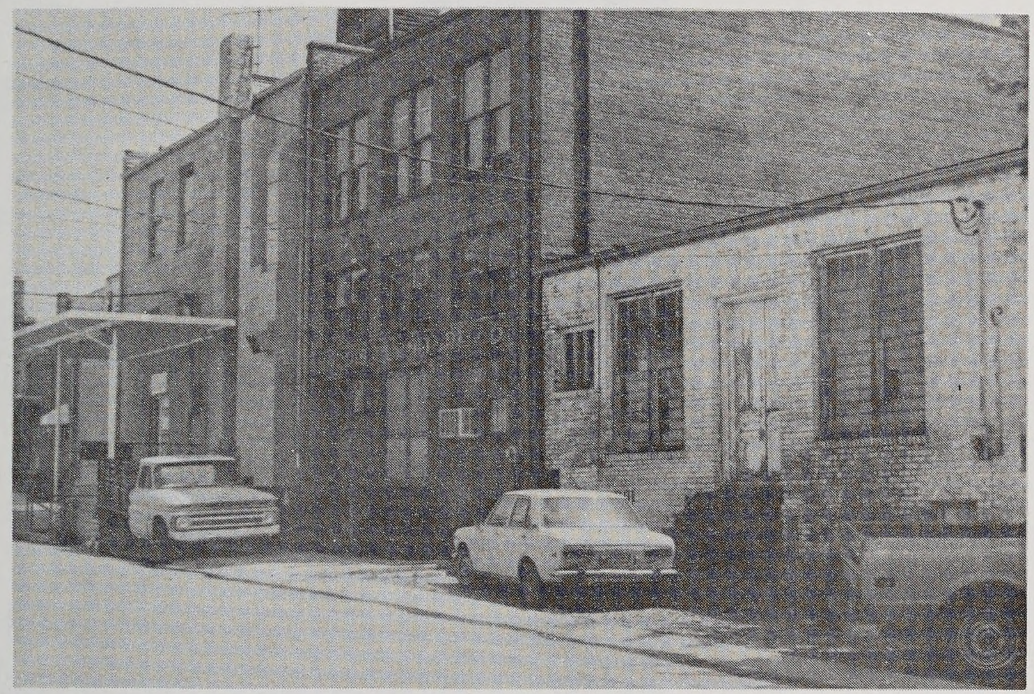
NEW CONSTRUCTION



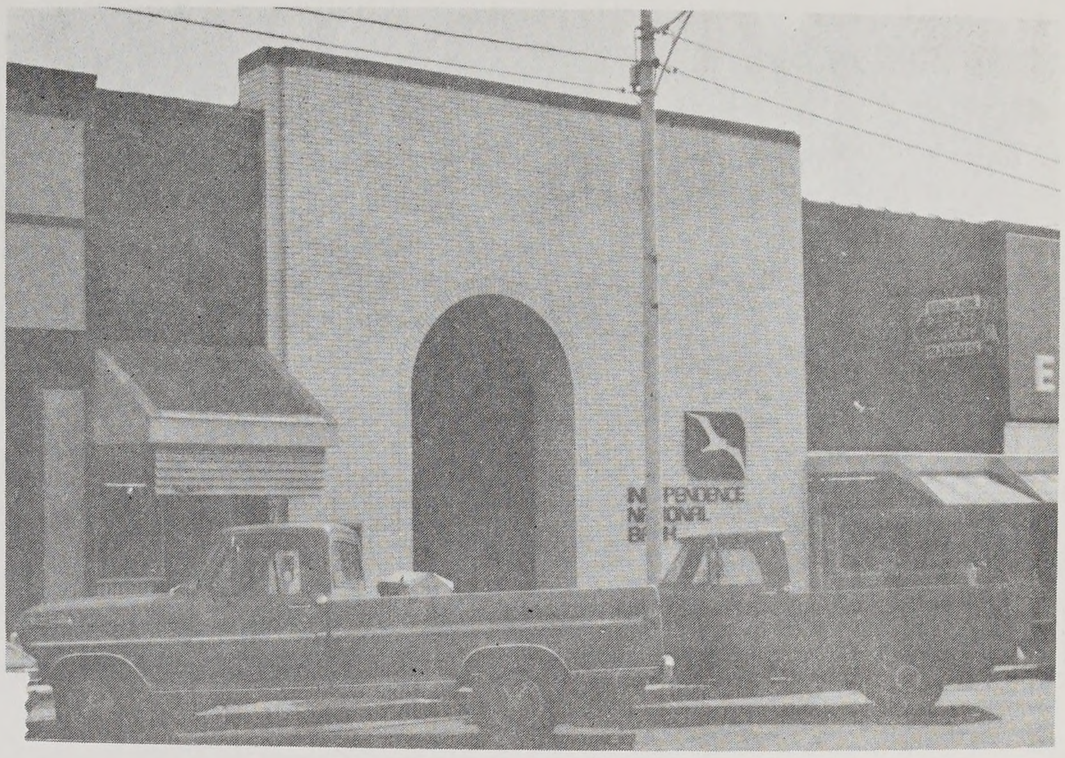


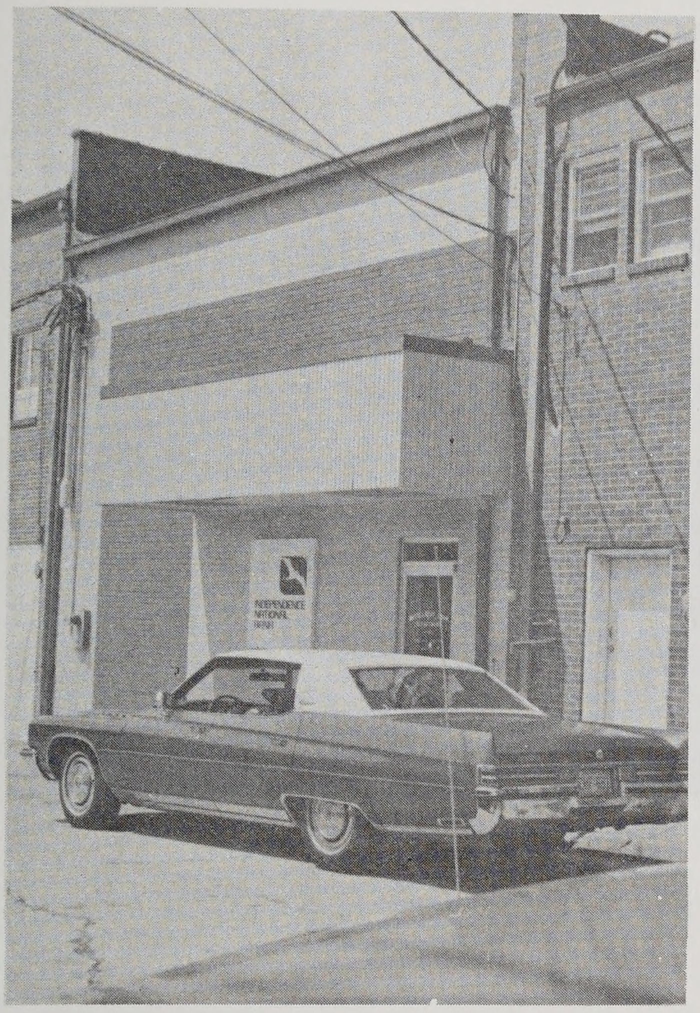
TRAFFIC CONGESTION



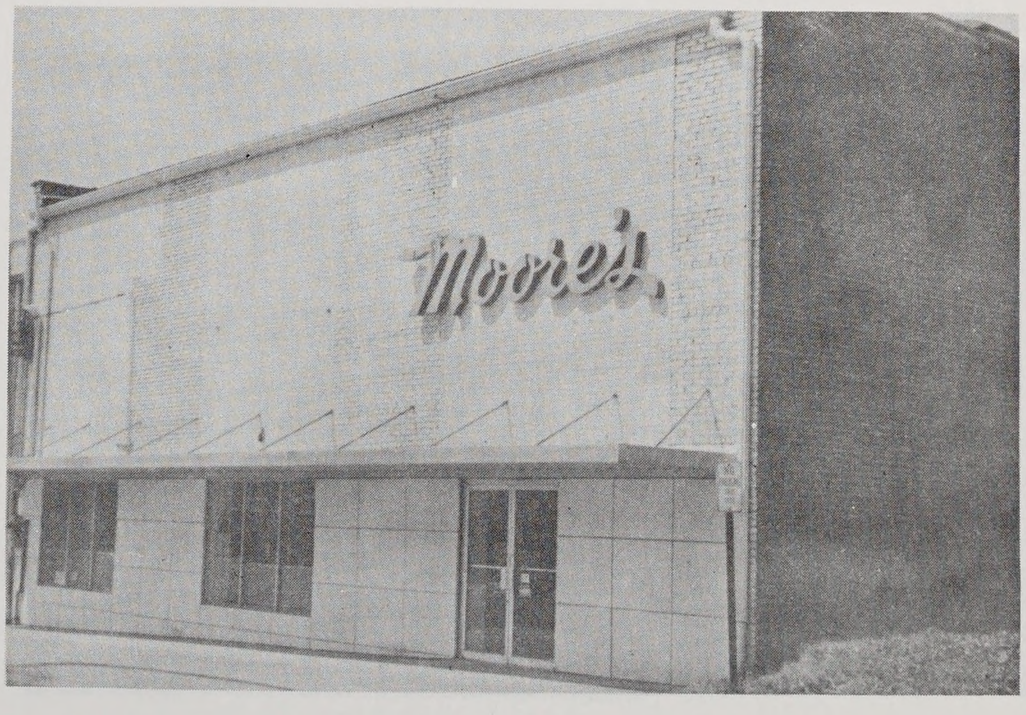


A NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT

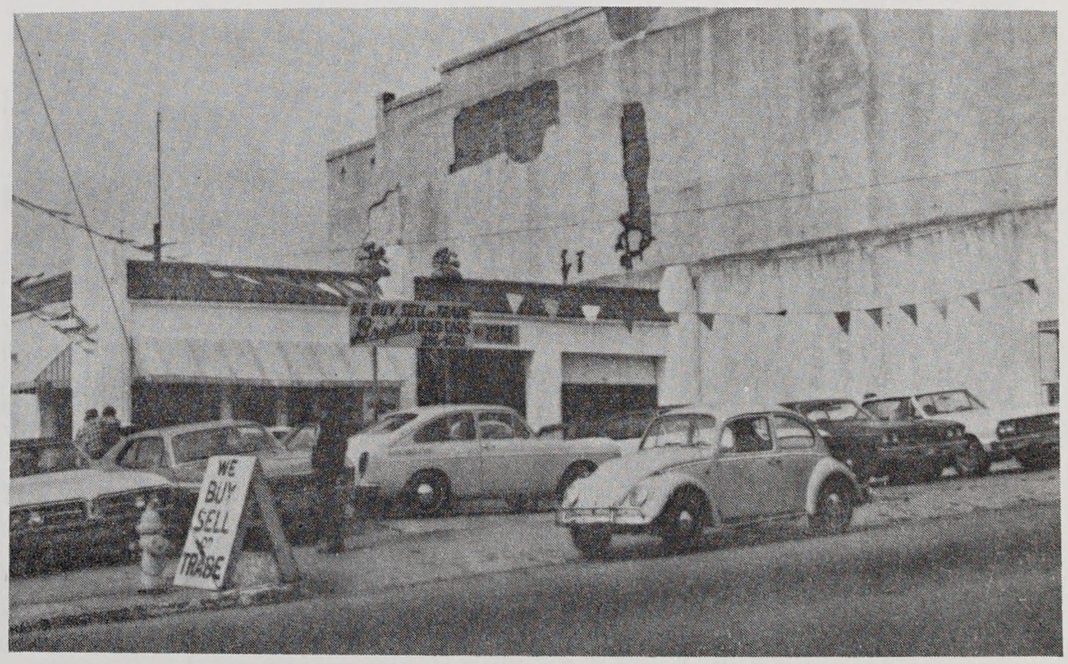




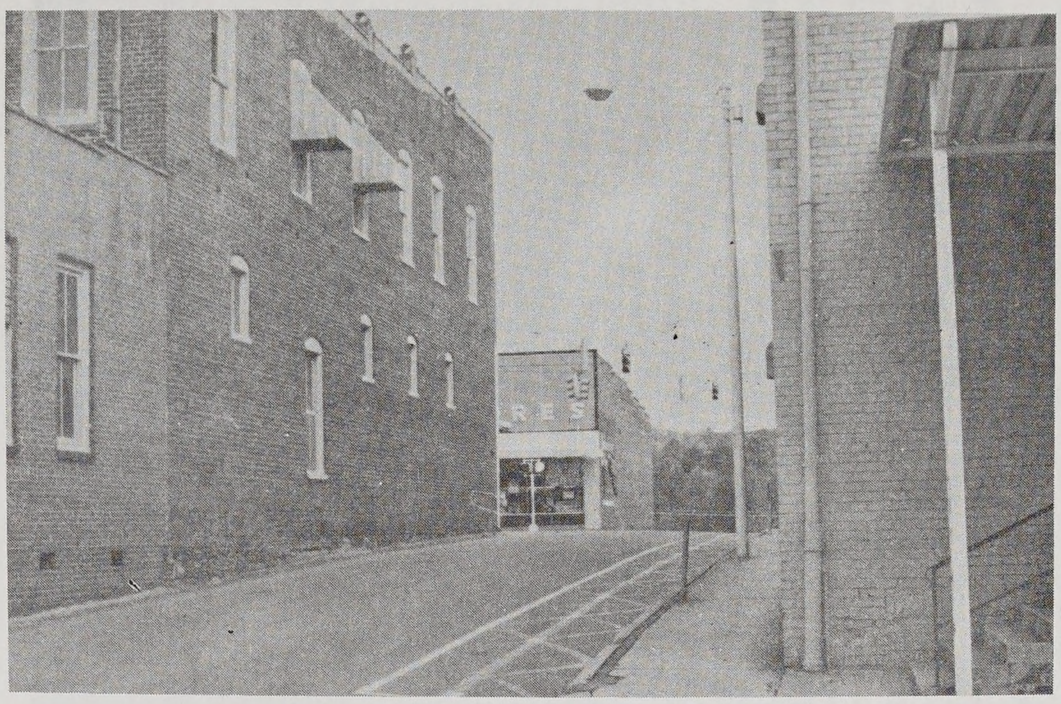
WHAT CAN BE DONE



INCOMPATIBLE LAND USES



DOWNTOWN PARK?



OVERHEAD WIRING

EMPTY PARKING SPACES

TOPOGRAPHY

VACANT LAND

ADVERTISING

APPENDIX A

A SUGGESTED TREE PLANTING PROJECT

Although planting street trees is a common practice in many North Carolina towns, the full value has not generally been achieved from such planting because of lack of a comprehensive community plan and careless selection of trees by abutting property owners. With proper guidance most property owners will gladly plant the trees which will contribute most to the permanent beauty of their street and will avoid planting trees which eventually create traffic hazards and interfere with sewers, sidewalks, and utility installations.

Well-placed and planned street trees contribute greatly to the beauty of a community. The presence of trees along the streets tends to soften the formal street and building lines and to bring about a natural and satisfying beauty. Trees also serve to blend homes, churches and business areas into a fluid, pleasing visual pattern.

Despite their assets, street trees, if improperly planted or maintained can become a liability. Trees may be planted too close to the curb or at corners where they interfere with proper vision, thus making them hazardous to the safe use of the street. Trees planted without regard to their fully grown size, may interfere with overhead utilities. They may be planted so that their roots will clog sewers, push up sidewalks, or interfere with the maintenance of underground utilities.

It is necessary that the plan must be developed and continued as a long-term program. A town ordinance regulating the care and planting of trees on town streets should be adopted. The ordinance should vest in some public authority (Town Council, Appearance Commission) the right to regulate the care and planting of trees on public land. The ordinance need not require that all of the work related to tree care be performed by the Town, but may merely provide that such work will be done subject to supervision. A suggested ordinance will be found attached at the end of this particular section.

I. Control of Street Tree Planting

As soon as an ordinance is adopted, as many interested persons and organizations as possible should be enlisted to help sponsor and carry out the plan. The individual property owners should be notified regarding the plan and told specifically what type of tree is proposed for the space in front of his property, where it is to be located, and how to plant and care for it. Only trees which are adaptable to the soil and climate of the Rutherfordton area should be selected. Consideration should be given to the height of the trees, the rate of growth, the length of life, the root system, the maintenance problems and the resistance to disease.

In deciding where trees should be placed consideration should be given to existing and planned utilities, the width of parking strips, and potential traffic hazards caused by full-grown trees. For maximum development large shade trees should be placed at least 50 feet apart and smaller trees at least 30-35 feet apart. On streets where the parking strip is very narrow, or where the sidewalk has been placed near the curb, the best procedure is to plant on the property owner's side of the walk. This provides a better growing area for the root system and keeps the trees far enough back from the street to avoid becoming a traffic hazard.

II. Tree Selection by Area

Sugar maple and scarlet oak trees could be planted alternately along the major thoroughfares. They are inexpensive, provide excellent summer shade and have brilliant fall coloring. Small flowering trees such as Dogwood or Crabapple - could have a visually pleasing effect in general residential areas.

In areas where few trees have been planted, there is an opportunity to show what can be done with a tree planting plan. In older districts, where some trees already exist, planting should conform with that variety already in existance.

III. Initiating the Program

A certain day or time period each year should be designated for the beginning of the planting campaign. Publicity for the campaign should be run on the local radio station, through the local schools and in the local newspaper. Organizations such as the garden clubs, a merchants association, the various service clubs, and church groups should be called upon to help in the distribution and the planting of the trees. The District Highway Commission Engineer should be consulted before the program is implemented.

IV. Principles to Consider in a Controlled Street Tree Planting Program

(1) Careful Selection in accordance with a comprehensive plan will give year-round benefit to the community.

(2) Size and Shape of trees and their adaptability to climate and location are prime considerations.

(3) The Height trees will attain when fully grown may necessitate multilation to allow the passage of overhead wires.

(4) The planting of Brittle trees in unprotected areas often results in breakage during wind and ice storms.

(5) Careless Location for trees with Root Systems near the surface can cause breakage of concrete.

(6) For Narrow Streets trees should be installed away from the street.

(7) Wide Streets allow the use of species which are tall and spreading.

APPENDIX B

PUBLICITY AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

The success of the downtown rejuvenation program will be determined to a large extent, by the degree of cooperation and participation offered by the residents of Rutherfordton in implementing these projects. Thus, it is essential that all the citizens of Rutherfordton learn about the program. By publicizing these activities, people know what is going to be done when and where projects will be done, and how and why they are being done.

As a first step, someone responsible for publicity should be appointed. Whoever is appointed should have access to the mass media as well as to the more subtle promotional channels.

A publicity schedule should be established. Some of the activities on this schedule might include the following:

1. Creation of a publicity campaign slogan.
2. Newspaper advertising:
    a. "Ugly Spot" series
    b. Ad Campaign
    c. Special Articles on Rejuvenation
    d. Community Appearance News Stories
3. Radio Advertising - through station I.D.'s and Public Service Announcements
4. Community Display Areas
5. Arrange for slide and film presentations to various interest groups.
6. Establish a competition and awards system for the business community or civic clubs.
7. Enlist local school groups.
8. Arrange for a business beautification display tie-in.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Abstract

This report is a study of the Central Business District in an effort to document existing conditions, identify problems and to suggest methods for improving the areas physical environment. It is intended to be used as a tool for decision makers and interested citizens in promoting the rejuvenation of the Town's downtown business area.

Environmental Effects

Beneficial Effects

1. The visual environment of the area would be considerably enhanced.
2. Vegetation planted in the downtown area would enhance the natural micro-climate.
3. Traffic congestion would be lessened.
4. A general clean-up would remove the degrading effects of trash, litter and deteriorating buildings.

Adverse Effects

1. Minor adverse effects would result from parking lot construction or construction of parks and green areas. Removal of dilapidated structures might also cause certain adverse effects.

Unavoidable Environmental Effects

It is unlikely that minor adverse environmental effects can be completely avoided.

Alternatives

The main alternative to the recommendation for rejuvenation is continued deterioration.

Relationship Between Short-Term Uses of the Environment and Maintenance of Long-Term Productivity

This report recommends actions that if implemented would benefit the long-term as well as short-term productivity of the area.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

There are no actions recommended in this report that would result in an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources.

Applicable Federal, State and Local Controls

All existing federal, state and local environmental controls are applicable.